

F France

- F 1 Veaux near Malaucene
- F 2 Murs
- F 3 Gordes, valley of Largue
- F 4 Valley of Largue
- F 5 Mourre de la Cabane
- F 6 Vigne du Cade
- F 7 Cennes-Monesties
- F 8 Mur-de-Barrez, Bellevue
- F 9 Commercy

- F 10 La Petite-Garenne
- F 11 Les Martins
- F 12 Grand Pressigny
- F 13 Lumbres
- F 14 Champignolles
- F 15 Auchy-la-Montagne
- F 16 Fourquerolles
- F 17 Frocourt
- F 18 Jamericourt

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F 53 PÂLIS „LE BUISSON GENDRE”, AUBE DISTRICT

Pierre-Arnauld de Labriffe and Isabelle Sidéra

The site lies within the Senonais area, in a small region of chalky hills called the Pays d'Othe, 30 km west of Troyes (Aube), *ca.* 40 km east of Sens (Yonne) and 2 km to the north of the Vanne river (see catalogue entry F 52, fig. 1). It is located at the beginning of the Cosdon basin, on a steep hillside orientated to the north/west. Like the two mines in Villemaur-sur-Vanne, this site belongs to Pays d'Othe mining complex.

This mine was found during the reconnaissance phase of the A5 motorway project between Sens and Troyes. Aerial photographs taken by A. Heurteaux and R. Goguey showed, about 200 m from the motorway route, circular and square enclosures belonging to a protohistorical necropolis. The same photographs showed numerous circular spots, suggesting that there was also a mine here. Fieldwalking along the motorway route had only resulted in collecting a limited quantity of flaked artefacts, among which were a pick and some flakes. In addition, all these objects bore scars of plough strokes. The site was discovered nearly accidentally after a mechanical trial trenching campaign. Indeed, as three funerary enclosures were situated to the east on the motorway route and a Gallo-Roman settlement to the west, trial trenching between these two sites revealed a Medieval graveyard and the flint mine at a place where no evidence could have augured the discovery of such sites (Fig. 1).

As it is orientated to the north-west, the hillside has suffered from erosion, so that none of the superficial formations has been preserved. Thus, one immediately reaches the Coniacian chalk deposits lying under a thin layer of humus (*ca.* 30 cm). Seven flint-seams were exploited there.

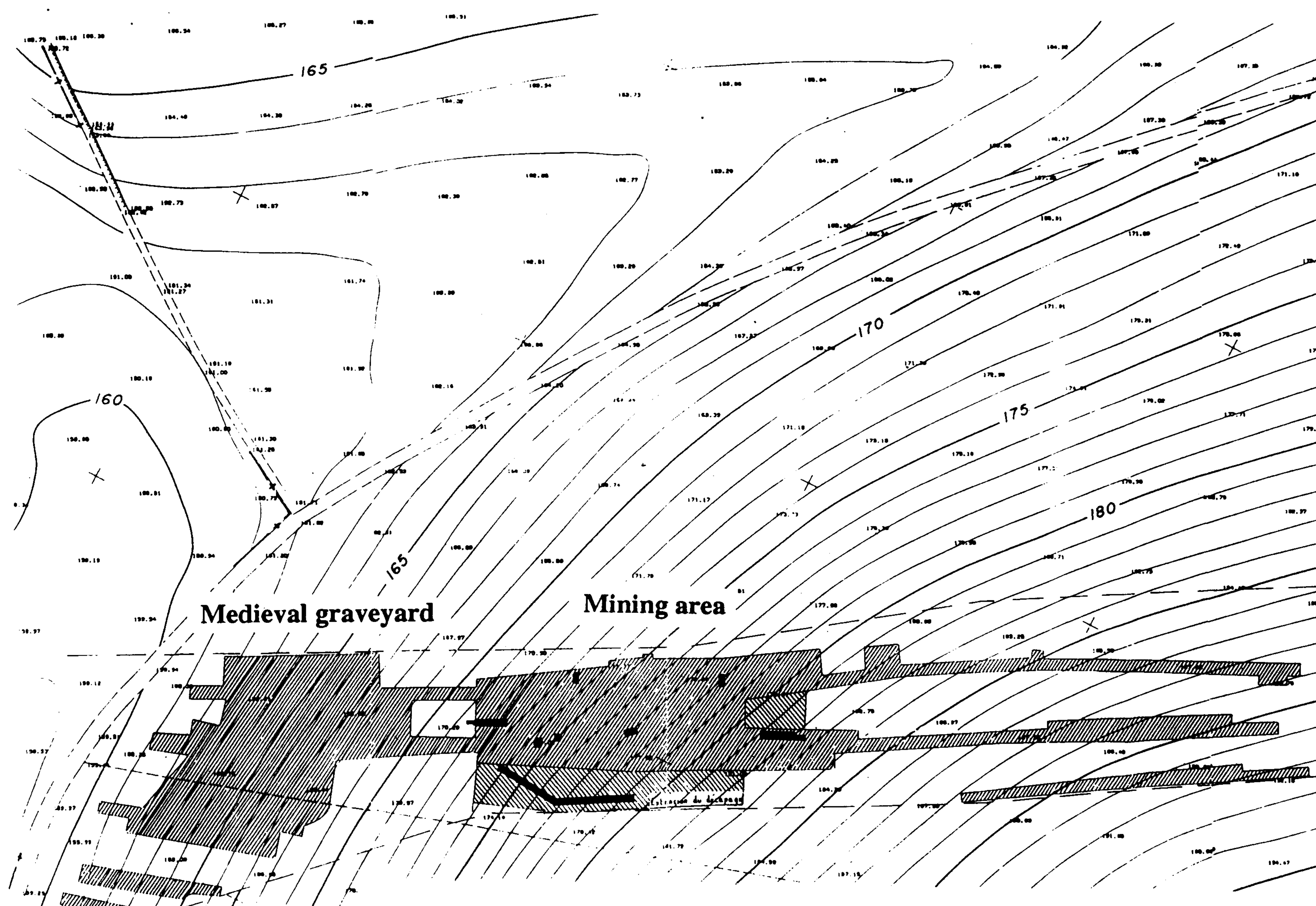


Fig. 1. F 53 Pâlis "Le Buisson Gendre". Plan of the different trenches and the extension of the scraped surface (after Hascoët and Mendoza).

The site was therefore the subject of rescue work during 3 months in the spring 1991 under the direction of J. Hascoët. The operation was carried out as follows: an extensive scraping-off (over more than 4000 m²) of the topsoil of the whole threatened surface of the site; mechanical excavation and plotting of the stratigraphical cross-sections of the structures; manual excavation of an extraction area that included 9 contiguous shafts.

The exact extent of the flint mine is hard to establish. However, this site is probably the same as that identified by aerial photographs in the locality of Pâlis "les Pennecieres". Thus we can estimate the extent of the site at about 10 hectares.

More than 150 structures were found (Fig. 2). The exploitation took place in different ways: pits (depth equal to the diameter, vertical inner sides); small basin-shaped diggings (depth less than the diameter); small-sized shafts (less than 1 m deep); opencast mining.

LEGENDE

- Shaft ●
- Shaft with karstic anomaly ● (with stippled pattern)
- Exploitation by trenches (with stippled pattern)
- Geological cutting S.G.
- Evaluation cutting S.D.
- Test cutting S.T.



Fig. 2. F 53 Pâlis "Le Buisson Gendre". Plan of the site (after Hascoët 1992).

No workshop was found, but a few lithics were found trapped in the filling of the features. There are no indications or remains that might indicate the location of the miners' settlement.

A limited number of red deer antler implements (13 artefacts) was found. They are similar to the artefacts found in Villemaur "Le Grand Bois Marot"; only tines were used. Their basis sometimes shows the same hafting modifications as at Villemaur. The abrasion of the tools is strongly marked. Typical of the final Neolithic, an axe socket found in Pâlis could confirm the chronological attribution proposed for the antler technology that characterize Le Grand Bois Marot. The limited use of antlers was connected with the the geology of the flint deposit.

There is currently no available radiocarbon datation.

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F 54 VILLEMAUR-SUR-VANNE "LE GRAND BOIS MAROT", AUBE DISTRICT

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The rural district of Villemaur is located about 40 km east of Sens (Yonne) and 20 km west of Troyes (Aube) in a small region called "Pays d'Othe" (see catalogue entry F 52, fig. 1). The site lies on the western side of a small dry valley leading to the Vanne River 1 km away (Fig. 1).

This site has been famous for a long time and it is mentioned as far back as 1882 as the largest workshop in the region (Salmon 1882). Although it was forgotten by the scientific community, the site has been the purpose of intensive surface collectings during the first part of the twentieth century. In the 1950s, C. Drioton (1954), a local amateur, carried out a limited excavation before the construction of a small railway.

The site was to be crossed perpendicularly by the construction of the A5 motorway, an evaluation was therefore carried-out, after which an excavation was decided upon.